



February 7, 2017

Proposed Senate Bill 426
Committee on INSURANCE AND REAL ESTATE
PUBLIC HEARING: 2/7/2017

Proposed Senate Bill 426 -- *AN ACT PROTECTING PATIENTS FROM INAPPROPRIATE BILLING PRACTICES.*

The Connecticut Center for Patient Safety strongly supports this proposed bill that is intended to improve the health care market in Connecticut.

In years past, health care clinicians and providers who worked full time in hospitals were almost exclusively employed by the hospitals that they worked in. Additionally, doctors with privileges at a particular hospital most often were also in the same insurance network as the hospital. More recently, in many cases, the physicians who work for departments such as emergency departments and anesthesia departments are staffed by people who are no longer employed by the hospital but rather are contract workers. These physicians are not always part of the same networks that the hospitals themselves are part of.

Patients choose a hospital to have an elective or urgent procedure and most often consider whether that hospital is in their insurance network. Unbeknownst to them, after they are home and receiving the bills, some are realizing that they have been billed much higher out-of-network rates for portions of the services that they received at the in-network hospital. They learn that a particular physician involved in their care was not part of the same network. This is not obvious nor is it something that most patients are even aware is occurring. This surprise billing is harming patients in that it is causing health care to become unaffordable, even to those with insurance. It is impacting their access to safe, high quality health care because their health care becomes less affordable.

This bill would help remove this obstacle to care and we support its passage.

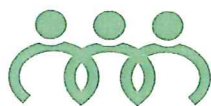
Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Freeman

Executive Director

Connecticut Center for Patient Safety

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CONNECTICUT CENTER
FOR PATIENT SAFETY
QUALITY HEALTHCARE IS A RIGHT.

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Dedicated to improving healthcare, reducing preventable medical harm and protecting patient rights

What Can CTCPS Do for Me?

We serve all of our fellow residents of Connecticut in a number of ways:

- ◇ We are the non-conflicted patient voice representing patients' preferences in many policy, legislative and other stakeholder conversations. Our outreach includes one-on-one member support when needed.
- ◇ We offer presentations and workshops to nursing schools, medical schools and hospitals.
- ◇ We speak with community groups about patient engagement and patient safety issues.
- ◇ We represent the patient perspective in response to media inquiries.
- ◇ We have a social media presence on Facebook and Twitter.
- ◇ We publish a monthly newsletter filled with interesting topics including guest articles from our members.
- ◇ Our website provides health care resources with links that educate and guide consumers on navigating the healthcare system, hospital care, senior services, information about health concerns, and legislative issues.
- ◇ We have an online support group for victims and others whose lives have been touched by medical malpractice and medical harm.
- ◇ We were built by and rely on volunteers. If you are interested in working with us, please contact us.

If you have a complaint or concern about your care in a CT hospital or by a CT healthcare provider, contact the Department of Public Health at: 860-509-7552 or go to their website at:
<http://bit.ly/2i5TwOM>

About the Connecticut Center for Patient Safety (CTCPS)

The Connecticut Center for Patient Safety was established in 2004 as a non-profit by a group of residents who had personally experienced the impact of medical harm. Our vision is grounded in the belief that the people of Connecticut have the right to receive safe, high quality health care. Furthermore, we understand the importance of organizing a coordinated patient and public voice to address the needs and expectations of individuals in an evolving and complex healthcare system.

Over the past 10 years, we have grown in terms of our outreach, our approaches and our services. Today we are dedicated to improving health care, reducing preventable medical harm and protecting your rights as a patient.

We don't want you to become a statistic:

- ◇ We do not want you to suffer preventable harm while hospitalized. According to estimates from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, there were 3.8 million hospital injuries in 2015.
- ◇ We do not want you to experience a medication error. The Institute of Medicine (IOM) reports that there is one medication error per patient per hospital day.
- ◇ We do not want you to receive medical care that is influenced by conflicts of interest. ProPublica has initiated consumer transparency to disclose financial ties between doctors and the pharmaceutical industry they serve. Visit their [Dollars for Docs website](https://projects.propublica.org/docdollars/) at: <https://projects.propublica.org/docdollars/>.

What we do want for you are doctors and hospitals focused on patient safety and providing high quality health care.

Things to bring with you to your doctor visits & to the hospital:

1. A list of all of your medications, herbals, & vitamins, with doses, prescriber and purpose.
2. Your pharmacy name, address & phone number.
3. A list of your questions/concerns.
4. Any diagnostic films &/or reports and lab results.
5. Your *Medical Information Sheet*: a page with everything that you can think of that is relevant to your health: your insurance coverage, emergency contact information, current and past medical conditions, your family health history, list of *all* allergies and adverse reactions, and other important information.

Additional items to bring to the hospital:

1. A pillow, pajamas, slippers, toiletries, chap stick.
2. A list of your important personal phone numbers.
3. A notepad and pencil or pen to journal, note questions, record Dr. or Nurses names.
4. Hand sanitizer and a baggie to place over the TV remote.
5. A book, digital music, cell phone, headphones and charger(s).

Free Patient Guides to read BEFORE you go to the hospital

- ⇒ THE BATZ GUIDE for Bedside Advocacy available for free download at www.louisebatz.org
- ⇒ Empowered Patients HOSPITAL GUIDE for Patients and Families available for free download at www.empoweredpatientcoalition.org
- ⇒ Empowered Patients THE PATIENT JOURNAL Your Hospital Diary available for free download at www.empoweredpatientcoalition.org.

Join the consumer healthcare movement and demand greater quality of care.

Sign up for our Monthly Newsletter!

The Connecticut Center for Patient Safety is a non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization offering education and information to:

- Empower health care consumers
- Engage patients in their care
- Improve the quality, safety and reliability of healthcare
- Protect the rights of patients

Visit our website at: <http://www.CTCPS.org/resources.cfm> for more information, guides and recommendations.

Be an engaged and informed patient.